United Nations S/2015/183

Security Council

Distr.: General
18 March 2015
English
Original: Arabic

Identical letters dated 15 March 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Further to our letter of 23 February 2015 (S/2015/132) regarding Turkey's flagrant aggression against the Syrian Arab Republic on Sunday 22 February 2015, we wish to draw attention to the baseless allegations contained in the identical letters from the Permanent Representative of Turkey addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2015/127). The Syrian Arab Republic categorically rejects the claims and distortions contained in that letter. It reaffirms the position conveyed in detail to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council in identical letters dated 23 February 2015 (S/2015/132).

The Syrian Arab Republic wishes to highlight the following points:

- In its letter, the Turkish side uses the term "enclave" to refer to the tomb of Sulayman Shah as territory under Turkish sovereignty, and claims that such sovereignty was established by the 1921 Ankara Agreement. That argument raises serious concerns. International law defines an enclave as a portion of a State surrounded entirely by the territory of another State and under the sovereignty of the first State. The tomb of Sulayman Shah is thus not in any sense an enclave under Turkish sovereignty inside Syrian territory. In that context, we wish to reaffirm the point made in our previous letter, namely that the 1921 Ankara Agreement limits Turkey's property rights to the tomb and its premises, and makes no reference to Turkey's sovereignty over the site or ownership of any land.

- Subsequent bilateral arrangements between the two countries, including the 1956 Aleppo Protocol and the letters exchanged since 1973 — the most recent of which, in 2012, reaffirmed the 1921 Ankara Agreement — literally reiterate the provisions of the Agreement. They state that Turkey's property rights are limited to the tomb and its premises, and they make no mention whatsoever of any Turkish sovereignty or land ownership. Indeed, the fact that the Turkish side invokes those documents is the most telling sign that its claims to sovereignty or land ownership are without foundation. The correspondence establishes the sovereign right of the Syrian Arab Republic over its territory, including the site of the tomb, and specifies that Turkish property rights are limited to the tomb and its premises.

15-04341 (E) 200315 230315

Please recycle

- The Syrian Arab Republic once again calls on the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council to condemn Turkey's aggression against Syria and its occupation of Syrian land, and to take immediate action by compelling Turkey to halt all construction in the occupied village of Ashmah and withdraw its forces.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative